

6. Parlors Face Age-Limit Bill Over Tanning by Teenagers

action, the usual juvenile agonies and some fuzzy philosophy. The first-time feature director Michael Arias, an American who lives and works in Japan, stuffs a lot of exposition and action into 100 eminently watchable if baggy minutes. But the laudably ambitious screenplay attributed to Anthony Weintraub tends to distract as much as it engages. Amid all the sharp turns, the periodic slicing and dicing, the gangsters and the shifty deals, the old man in the bathhouse and the snake in its lair, it can be tough to pinpoint what precisely Black and White are up to, much less the filmmakers.

Even so, “Tekkonkinkreet” demands to be seen, if only for its beauty. The generally bright palette and overall soft look work a nice contrast to the dark theme, as if the world itself were on the children’s side. The character design of the boys is particularly lovely, almost loving, from the scar slashed across Black’s right eye like a warning to the hat shaped like a bear’s head that White wears, his mischievous, smiling face peeping through the animal’s open mouth. There’s a touch of Saint-Exupéry’s “[Little Prince](#)” in these two children, whose adventures and lessons seem plucked right from this book: “To forget a friend is sad. Not every one has had a friend. And if I forget him, I may become like the grown-ups. ...” And that, as everyone knows, would be disastrous.

“Tekkonkinkreet” is rated R (Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian). Some adult language, fighting and bloodshed.


TEKKONKINKREET


Opens today in Manhattan.


Directed by Michael Arias; written (in Japanese, with English subtitles) by Anthony Weintraub, based on the manga by Taiyo Matsumoto; animation and production design by Studio4°C; music by Plaid; produced by Eiko Tanaka, Eiichi Kamagata, Masao Teshima and Ayao Ueda; released by Destination Films. At the Quad Cinema, 34 West 13th Street, Greenwich Village. Running time: 100 minutes.

WITH THE VOICES OF: Kazunari Ninomiya (Black), Yu Aoi (White), Masahiro Motoki (Snake) and Min Tanaka (Rat).

A version of this review appeared in print on July 13, 2007, on page E8 of the New York edition with the headline: Orphan Superpower In the Realm Of Anime.


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June 10th, 20109:20 am

Rating:●●●●●

2. concretely awesome!

I hadn't thought of the Little Prince connection, but it's true! I really loved this film, and I'm not at all a manga or anime maniac. Great story, fantastic visuals, cool music by Plaid (I even bought the soundtrack).

– *WOI, Bay Area*

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April 2nd, 20088:50 pm

Rating:●●●●○

1. Nothing to add!

Good article!

– *lagoon,*

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